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220.

[This Proclamation was dated 11th Feb. 1637-8. See Rushworth's Coll. Vol. II p. 617.]

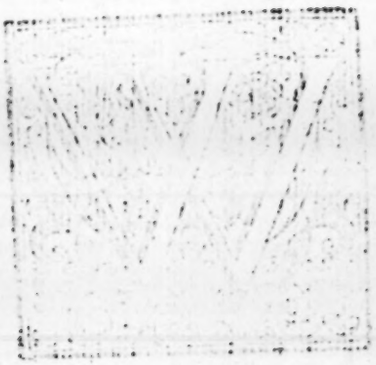
¶ By the King.

¶ A Proclamation concerning the carrying and recarrying of Letters, aſwell within his Majeſties Realmes and Dominions, as into and from forreigne parts.

WHereas heretofore by direction of His Majeſtie an Agreement was made betwixt Thomas Witherings Eſquire, His Majeſties Poſtmaſter for forreigne parts, and Mounſieur Denoveau Poſtmaſter to the French King, and his Commiſſioners, bearing date at Callais, on the eleventh day of May, Anno Dom. 1636. That aſwell all Letters or Paquets, which ſhould be exported out of this Realme into the Kingdome of France, as all ſuch Letters as ſhould be imported out of the ſame Kingdome into the Realme of England, ſhould paſſe by the way of Dover, Callais, Bulleyn, Abbeville, and Amiens, and by no other Rode or way whatſoever, and that all private Poſts, Meſſengers, Curryers, and Letter-Carriers (other then ſuch Poſts, Curryers, and Meſſengers, as ſhould be nominated and appointed by the ſaid Thomas Witherings, and Mounſieur Denoveau) ſhould be prohibited to carry or recarry any Letter or Letters between either of the ſaid Kingdomes, which ſaid Agreement being afterwards conceived to be beneficiall to both States, and advantagious in their Commerce, was both by His Majeſtie and the French King reciprocally allowed of, And in purſuit whereof the French King did by a Proclamation dated at Paris, the thirteenth day of Aprill, Ann. Dom. 1637. prohibite all the ſaid Poſts, and Curryers accordingly.

Now His Majeſtie likewiſe in purſuance of the ſaid Agreement, and taking into His Princely conſideration how much it imports the State, and this whole Realme, that the ſecrets thereof be not diſcloſed to forreigne Nations, which cannot be prevented, if a promiſcuous uſe of tranſmitting or taking up of forreigne Letters, by theſe private Poſts and Carriers aforeſaid, ſhould be ſuffered, which will alſo be no ſmall prejudice to His Merchants in their tradings. And forasmuch as there hath lately been complaints made to his Majeſties Embaſſadours in

Patent for establishing a Letter Office
22 June 1637



France, that the said Curryers and Letter-carriers, do continually passe by the way of Rye and Deipe, as formerly they did, to the great prejudice of Correspondencies; His Maiestie therefore doth straightly charge and command, and hereby declare His Royall Will and pleasure to be, That from henceforth no Letters or Paquets Whatsoever shall passe by the way of Rye and Deipe, but all shall be transmitted by the way of Dover, Callais, Bulleyn, Abbevile, and Amiens, according to the said Agreement. (And His Maiestie doth hereby prohibite all the said Messengers, and French Posts, and all other Posts, and Letter-carriers Whatsoever that have formerly gone by the way of Rye and Deipe, or any other Posts, Carriers, or Messengers (except such as shall be appointed by the said Thomas Witherings) That they do not presume to take up, transmit, carry, or recarry any Letters or Paquets Whatsoever into or from any forreigne parts by the said way of Rye and Deipe, or by any other Way or Rode Whatsoever, upon pain of His Majesties high displeasure, and the pains and penalties which may ensue. And His Majestie taking further into his consideration, That the mutuall Commerce and correspondencie of His Subjects Within His Majesties own Dominions Will be as advantagious and beneficiall as the Trade with forreigne Nations; And that nothing will more increase and advance the same, then the safe and speedie conveying, carrying, and recarrying of Letters from one place to another; And for the setling and confirming of a Letter Office to that end and purpose, erected, and constituted by His Majesties Letters Patents, bearing date the twenty second day of June, in the thirteenth yeer of His Majesties Reigne.

Now for avoiding of all questions and scruples which might hereafter arise in disturbance of the said Officer in the said service, and for restraining of severall and sundrie abuses and miscarriages which have lately been, and daily are committed, to the prejudice of the said Officer, and in contempt of His Majesties Royall grant and Proclamation in that behalf; His Majesties Royall Will and pleasure therefore is, And he doth hereby straightly charge and command, That no Post or Carryer whatsoever within His Majesties Dominions (other then such as shall be nominated and appointed by the said Thomas Witherings, shall presume to take up, carrie, receive, and deliver any Letter or Letters, Paquet or Paquets Whatsoever to any such place or places where the said Thomas Witherings shall have setled Posts according to the said Grant) Except a particular Messenger sent on purpose with Letters by any man for his own occasions, or Letters by a friend, or by common known Carriers Who are hereby permitted to carrie any Letters along with their Carts, Waggons, and Packhorses, travelling With the same the ordinarie known Journeys that common Carriers use to travell.

Provided alwayes, That they, nor any of their servants, at no time stay at the place from whence they carrie any Letters above eight houres after their Carts, Waggons, or Packhorses are departed, nor bring any Letters to London, or elsewhere, above eight houres before the said Carts, Waggons, or Packhorses shall come there. And if any Post, Messenger, or Letter-Carrier Whatsoever, shall offend contrarie to His Majesties Proclamation, upon complaint thereof made, His Majestie will cause a severe and exemplary punishment to be inflicted upon the offendors therein. And His Majesties further pleasure is, That it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Thomas Witherings and his Deputies, that do or shall execute the said Office, to have, receive, and take for the portage and conveyance of all Letters that he or they shall receive, carrie, and recarry in England as aforesaid, Two pence a single Letter, and

four pence a double, and for bigger six pence the Ounce if under eighty Miles, And from eighty Miles to one hundred and fourty miles, four pence the single, and eight pence the double Letter, and for bigger, nine pence the Ounce; And for one hundred and fourtie miles or above, six pence the single Letter, twelve pence the double Letter, and if bigger, twelve pence the Ounce; And for Letters of Ireland, he or they shall take according to a Proclamation published by the Lord Deputy and Councell there, nine pence the single Letter, and if bigger, after two shillings six pence the Ounce, according as the same are limited in His Majesties Letters Patents aforesaid. And if any Post-boy or other Servant to the said Master of the said Letter Office, his Deputies or Assignes shall receive or take any Post or Postage twice for any Letter or Paquet which he or they shall carry or recarry, as aforesaid, contrary to the true meaning hereof; Then His Majestie doth hereby authorize, will, and require, That the next Justice, and Justices of Peace upon complaint thereof made to him or them, do punish the parties so offending, according to their deserts, in an exemplarie way, that others may be deterred from abusing His Subjects, in like kinde and manner. And His Majestie doth further require and command all His Subjects, allwell Aliens, and Denizens, and others, That they shall not deliver, or cause to be delivered any Letters or Paquets to any of the said French Posts, or other Forraine or Inland Posts, Messengers, or Letter-Carriers whatsoever, to be carried from any of the places where the said Thomas Witherings shall have setled Posts within His Majesties Dominions, or to be carried out of His Majesties Realmes into any Forrain parts, upon pain of His high indignation, and such punishment as may be further inflicted.

And lastly, His Majestie doth hereby charge, and command the Maiors of Rye, Dover, Canterbury, Ipswich, Yarmouth, Norwich, Barwick, Newcastle, Yorke, Chester, Exeter, Plymouth, Salisbury, Bristoll, and all other Justices of Peace, Maiors, Sheriffes, Bailiffs, Constables, Headboroughs, and all other His Majesties Officers, Ministers, and loving Subjects whatsoever, to be aiding and assisting to the said Thomas Witherings, and to take care to see the due execution of His said Majesties Proclamation, And that they suffer none within their Liberties to offend against the same, as they will answer the contrary at their uttermost perils.

God save the King.

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